Met Office

July 2004

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

The UK as a whole, experienced close to average mean temperatures, rainfall and sunshine. However there were large variations in rainfall, with some areas of eastern England receiving well over double their average rainfall, whilst some places in Scotland had less than half of their average rainfall.

Wittering recorded 108 mm in the 24 hour period to 5 p.m. on the 8th, with 51 mm recorded in just two hours. Central London recorded 30.1 °C on 29th.

England and Wales diary of highlights

Changeable at first with some thundery rain. More settled later with some very warm and humid air becoming established towards the end of the month. A notable wet, windy and sometimes cool spell of weather on the 7th and 8th.

1st to 4th An area of low pressure drifted across the north of the United Kingdom, giving cyclonic conditions to many parts of England and Wales. This translated to a period of sunshine and showers. Some showers were heavy and thundery with 42.4 mm recorded at Boscombe Down in Wiltshire on the 2nd. Another area of low pressure affected southern England on the 4th giving further showery rain, locally heavy and thundery.

5th and 6th High pressure built in from the west to give most places long sunny periods. A few showers affected more eastern parts of England, some thundery. In the sunshine central London recorded a temperature of 25 °C on the 6th.

7th to 11th A deepening area of low pressure spread from north-west France into England and Wales, giving some unseasonably wet, windy and sometimes thundery weather. This was followed by a showery north-westerly air stream. Wittering (near Peterborough) recorded 108.0 mm in the 24-hour period to 5 p.m. on the 8th, an exceptional amount. Gusts in exposed parts of south-west England and south Wales exceeded 60 m.p.h. Some very cool temperatures were recorded in the rain; Sennybridge in Powys recorded just 9.6 °C on the 8th.

12th to 18th A ridge of high pressure developed across the south giving quieter conditions. As warmer and more humid air became established, coastal fog became a feature. A frontal wave developed on the northern flank of the high on the 14th giving rather cloudy and sometimes wet conditions, especially across Wales. The front and its associated waves then spread east on the 17th to give East Anglia and south-east England some heavy and thundery rain. The most violent thunderstorms were in Essex and marble-sized hail was reported. Holbeach (Lincolnshire) recorded 25.2 mm in one hour in a heavy shower on the 18th.

19th to 23rd A fairly slack pressure pattern then became established giving some warm sunny spells, but also a scattering of showers, some heavy and thundery; Scampton in Lincolnshire recorded 28.6 mm in just one hour on the 22nd. A high of 27.6 °C was reached in central London and Charlwood on the 22nd.

24th to 31st The last week of the month saw high pressure building across all parts of England and Wales. Weakening weather fronts drifted into the high from the north at first, giving cloudier and occasionally wet conditions, especially further north. Later in the period the high began to drift eastwards drawing up some very warm and humid air from the Continent. A temperature of 30.1 °C was achieved in central London on the 29th,

the warmest day of the month. A weakening cold front spread in from the west on the 29th to give some wet weather in northern England. Misty low cloud affected eastern coasts at the very end of the month.

Scotland diary of highlights

Unsettled but dry.

Unsettled westerly weather dominated the month with high pressure not making an appearance until the last week. However there were no major episodes of rain and days of frequent or heavy showers were rare. Consequently, over Scotland as a whole, it was a dry July.

During the first five days a centre of low pressure moved slowly east and crossed the north of Scotland. The weather was rather cool with a good deal of cloud and some showers, but there were also sunny intervals.

Relatively high pressure covered the country between the 6th and 8th giving emphasis on the sunny periods rather than the showers. Under clear skies and light winds the temperature fell to freezing at Altnaharra and Tulloch Bridge on the morning of the 8th.

A light northerly airflow affected Scotland from the 9th to the 11th, bringing grey skies but only a little rain.

The changeable westerly weather continued from the 12th to the 19th. There were a couple of spells of general rain, but for much of the time there were sunny intervals and scattered showers.

More disturbed conditions affected Scotland from the 20th to the 24th with low pressure to the north-west pushing south-westerly winds and troughs across the country. There was 40 mm of rain at Sloy on the 20th and 33 mm at Dalmally on the 24th. The remaining days were predominantly showery.

High pressure prevailed during the last week of July, bringing much fine weather. Air of cold origin gave sunny periods on the 25th and 26th and these conditions returned for the last two days of the month. Between these spells warm and humid air with more cloud covered the country, with the temperature reaching 25 °C at Charterhall on the 29th.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The month overall was a disappointing high summer month with mean temperatures just below the long term average. Indeed it was only the last two days of the month when sunny skies and temperatures into the low twenties occurred Province-wide.

The first week was often showery with some heavy and thundery showers in places and a funnel cloud was reported at Castle Espie on the 1st. A total of 15 mm of rain occurred in places during the first two days. With winds from a north-westerly quarter, maximum temperatures were frequently down to between 16 and 18 °C. The 7th however was drier, brighter and warmer everywhere. The showery theme resumed for the next few days though showers were more scattered than during the first week. Clearing skies at night allowed night-time temperatures to fall well into single figures with local grass frost and a night minimum temperature of just 1 °C at Katesbridge, Co Down on the morning of the 10th.

The 12th started cloudy with some showery rain but became brighter with sunny spells by afternoon and this persisted well into the 13th. Cloud and rain however returned by the evening of the 13th.

The third week of the month was unsettled and still rather cool with some showers or longer spells of rain. The 20th especially was almost Autumnal with gusty winds accompanying widespread rain. A thunderstorm late on the afternoon of the 20th saw Enniskillen receive 25 mm of rain in just two hours. The 21st - 24th was a brighter period with some sunshine and just a few showers, but cloud and rain associated with advancing

warmer air occurred between the 25 and 27th. Sunnier spells on the 28th allowed temperatures to reach a very warm and humid feeling 21 to 23 °C. Further rain affected all areas on the 29th.

High pressure finally arrived for the closing two days of the month with sunny skies for most on the 30th and 31st. The months highest temperature of 24 °C was recorded at Newfordge Belfast on the 31st.

Rainfall overall was slightly below normal in the east and well below normal over parts of Co Down with only 66% of average at Silent Valley. Parts of the west were wetter and Enniskillen saw 154% of average though this was mainly due to some local thundery downpours on the 20th.

Sunshine overall was around average although parts of Co Londonderry had 117% of the long term average.

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